

24. Senegal
25. Sudan
26. Syria
27. Sierra Leone
28. Somalia
29. Iraq
30. Oman
31. Guinea
32. Guinea-Bissau
33. Palestine
34. Kirghystan
35. Qatar
36. Cameroon
37. Kuwait
38. Lebanon
39. Libya
40. Maldives
41. Mali
42. Malaysia
43. Egypt
44. Morocco
45. Mauritania
46. Niger
47. Nigeria
48. Yemen
49. Mozambique
50. Turkmenistan
51. Tajikistan
52. Kazakhstan
53. Surinam
54. Guyana

[Translation]

#### **Increase in the cost of Passport**

\*456. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :  
SHRI ILIYAS AZMI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the cost of passport and increase in the cost made during the last one year;

(b) the reasons for continuous increase in the cost of passport;

(c) whether the Government propose to simplify and streamline the procedure for issuing passports and to reduce its cost; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) to (d) There has been no increase in the fees for various passport services including issue of fresh passports since July, 1993.

A number of steps have been taken to simplify and streamline the procedures for expeditious issue of passports which, *inter-alia*, are:

- (a) upgradation of office facilities including computerisation leading to faster screening and processing of applications;
- (b) simplification of passport and miscellaneous services forms;
- (c) issue of passports without any further wait for police clearance in cases where police reports are not received during the prescribed time-limit of four weeks;
- (d) a thorough scrutiny of applications at the acceptance stage itself to check their completeness/correctness in all respects;
- (e) augmentation of staff strength to reduce and clear pendencies;
- (f) provision to issue passports in cases of emergency/urgency on out of turn basis on the strength of Verification Certificate issued by an authorised official ;
- (g) expansion of the list of officials authorised to sign Verification Certificates;
- (h) introduction of passports valid for 20 years; and
- (i) automatic reissue of passports on expiry without fresh police verification.

There is no proposal to reduce the fees for passports in view of the constant increase in the cost of production of the passport booklets.

#### **Use of Indian Languages**

\*457. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have given option to answer questions in all the competitive examinations for recruitment to different services in Indian languages;

(b) if so, the names of all these services;

(c) whether the resolution to this effect passed by the Parliament on 18 January, 1968 has been fully implemented; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the Government intend to implement it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b) Recruitment to various services/posts under the Government is done through a number of recruiting bodies like UPSC, SSC Railway Recruitment Board or through Departmental Selection Committees etc. Medium of examinations conducted by these bodies is decided by them in consultation with the respective administrative Ministry/Department keeping in view the provisions of the Resolution of 1968 as also the specific requirements of the service/post for which selection is made. As regards UPSC and SSC, the two main bodies for making selection for various services/ posts

under the Government with which the Ministry of Personnel, P.G. and Pensions is concerned, the extent of use of Indian Language(s) in the examinations conducted by them is indicated in the attached Statement.

(c) and (d) The question of extending the option for writing answers in the Indian languages in the other examinations conducted by Union Public Service Commission was examined by the Expert Committee whose recommendations are currently under consideration of the Government. In view of importance and sensitivity of the matter and divergent views on the subject, Government's effort is to seek a consensus and evolve a nationally acceptable policy after holding wider consultation with the State Governments and others. The process of consultation is still not over.

### Statement

#### *Indian languages permitted for answering question*

	UPSC	SSC
Examinations in which option is available to answer questions in English, Hindi and other languages included in the VIIIth Schedule	Civil Services (Main) Examination	-----
Examinations in which option is available to answer questions in English or Hindi only	Section Officers Stenographers Grade/ (Grade I) Limited Departmental Competitive Examination (Option for some papers only)	Assistant Grade (Main) Examination
	Grade I (Under Secretary) Limited Departmental Competitive Examination for Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes	Clerks Grade Examination (for Group 'D' staff)
		Stenographers Grade C Examination (for essay paper)

- NOTE : 1. For all the other main examinations conducted by UPSC requiring descriptive answers, use of only English language is permitted
2. All the other major examinations conducted by Staff Selection Commission and some examinations of UPSC are of objective type pattern requiring tick marking for which medium for answering the questions is not relevant.

#### *[Translation]*

#### **Indo-Oman Gas Pipeline Project**

\*458. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :  
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ambitious project for laying the gas pipelines from Oman has been suspended,

(b) if so, the reasons therefor,

(c) whether the Government propose to revive these projects in view of the huge amount spent therein; and

(d) if so, the time by which the project is proposed to

be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU) :

(a) to (c) The feasibility study for the Oman-India gas pipeline project is yet to be completed by the Oman Oil Company. Although the Government of India has not spent any money on the feasibility study, attempts are being made to expedite the feasibility study in view of the importance of the project. A joint working group has been formed by GAIL and Oman Oil Company to expedite the feasibility study and to identify possible sources of funds for the project.

(d) It is not possible at present to indicate a time frame for the implementation of the project.